



Central Coast Groundwater Coalition Member Update Meetings

PRUNEDALE, SANTA MARIA, KING CITY
JANUARY 18, 19, 24, 2017

Meeting Overview

- I. Alternative Groundwater Monitoring Plan (Draft)
- II. Member feedback

Ask Questions Anytime!



CCGC Organization

Membership Status

- 538 members
- 206,454 acres
 - 141,335 acres North counties
 - 65,119 acres South counties

Why we are doing this?

- Cost effective approach to complying with Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program
- Provide Cooperative Groundwater Monitoring Option
- Looking forward to 2020 Order renewal



CCGC Board of Directors

- **Tim Borel** The Nunes Company - Chair
- **Mike King** Mission Ranches – Secretary, Treasurer
- **Pete Aiello** Uesugi Farms
- **Richard Bianchi** Sabor Farms
- **John Eiskamp** JE Farms
- **Dennis Lebow** Reiter Berry
- **Tom Minetti** Betteravia Farms
- **Andrew Parolini** McIntyre Vineyards/Monterey Pacific
- **Randy Sharer** Sharer Brothers Farms
- **Ryan Acquistapace** Grower

Board Advisory

- **Abby Taylor-Silva**, Grower-Shipper Association of Central CA
- **Claire Wineman**, Grower-Shipper Association of SLO and SB Counties
- **Norm Groot**, Monterey County Farm Bureau

Legal Counsel

- **Tess Dunham**, Somach, Simmons & Dunn



CCGC Consultants

Michael L. Johnson, LLC. (MLJ-LLC)

- Manages CCGC groundwater monitoring program
 - Conducted monitoring of CCGC member wells from 2013 - 2016
- Manages CCGC Regional Water Board reports/submittals
- Working over the last decade with agriculture in Central Valley
 - Technical program manager for East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition and San Joaquin County and Delta Water Quality Coalition, provides technical services to 3 other Coalitions

Luhdorff & Scalmanini Consulting Engineers (LSCE)

- Performs Data Analysis and Aquifer Mapping
 - Completed CCGC Characterization Reports and addendums
- Works with multiple Central Valley Water Quality Coalitions on deliverables such as Groundwater Assessment Reports



CCGC Staff

Rivkah Cohen, Membership Manager

- Manages:
 - CCGC membership database and acreage changes
 - Exceedance notifications
 - Member invoices
 - Regional Water Board reports/submittals

Stephen Healy, Assistant Membership Manager

Kara Stuart, Membership Consultant





CCGC Staff

Parry Klassen, Executive Director

- Agricultural Communications, California State University, Fresno
- Executive Director: East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition
- Executive Director: Coalition for Urban Rural Environmental Stewardship (CURES)
- 35+ year career in agriculture
- Grower in eastern Fresno County – peaches, nectarines



CCGC Organization Structure

21st Century Virtual Organization

- Administration based at Grower-Shipper of Central California, Salinas
- Not a brick and mortar enterprise

Operate most cost effective way

- Hire specialized consultants only when needed

Group permit / coalition best approach

- Recognize we have to perform
- Team effort between CCGC Staff and Board of Directors

Respond in best interest of our members



CCGC Accomplishments to Date

1,238 total member wells sampled between 2013-16

- 797 domestic
- 441 irrigation

Completed North and South Workplans on schedule

Created nitrate contour maps of major groundwater basins

Proved that coalition approach can work on Central Coast



CCGC Meetings With Regional Board Staff

- Held quarterly
- Regular updates on CCGC's sampling activities
- Exceedance notification and follow-up efforts
- Discuss issues of immediate interest
- Potential future Monitoring and Reporting Plan changes

Goal of meetings

Establish trust and credibility with Regional Water Board



Regional Water Board Key Upcoming Dates

Regional Water Board Meetings

- **Conditional Waiver “3.0” to go into effect March 2017**
- **January 26 – Santa Barbara**
 - Update on status of 3.0 comments
 - CCGC proposal not part of agenda
- **March 7-9, Watsonville**
 - “3.0” General Order renewal hearing and vote
 - Presentation on CCGC Alternative Approach
- **CCGC Alternative Plan can be approved via Executive Officer signature**
 - Likely to be part of March meeting
 - CCGC to promote approach to Board members prior to March meeting



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

CCGC Board of Directors Strategy for Alternative Proposal

Regional Water Board chair and Executive Officer stated to CCGC that:

- Support CCGC continued involvement in implementation of “3.0” Conditional Waiver Program
- Want to have strong coalition organization when “4.0” is developed and adopted

CCGC needs to differentiate coalition requirements from individual program

- Need to have “better deal” to justify continued member participation



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

What is “better deal”?

Regional Board staff response:

Will allow different CCGC member monitoring requirements IF CCGC provides substantial assistance to members in completing Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) reports



Proposed Groundwater Monitoring Requirements; all growers

Current proposed requirements for “3.0” groundwater monitoring for all Central Coast growers

- Requires sampling of all domestic wells & primary irrigation well on each ranch
 - Two samples of each well in 2017 (Spring and Fall)
 - Nitrates and full suite of ions (MRP Table 3 requirements)
 - All well results data posted on GeoTracker
 - Domestic
 - Irrigation
- Requires Tier 2 and 3 growers to report Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA)
 - TNA reporting not required for Tier 1 or Tier 2 “low risk crops”
- 3.0 changes very likely to be adopted by Regional Water Board in March



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

Responsibilities of Central Coast Groundwater Coalition (CCGC) Members

Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3

Conduct domestic monitoring twice in a 3 year period (2017-19)

- One in spring, one in fall over 3 years
- Use a qualified laboratory.
- Sampling must follow CCGC SOP and QAPP requirements.



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

Responsibilities of Central Coast Groundwater Coalition (CCGC) Members

Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3

Domestic well monitoring

- Member to contract with commercial lab to analyze water sample
- Nitrate analysis only (if domestic well previously monitored according to the MRP Table 3 requirements)
 - If not previously monitored, all Table 3 constituents need to be monitored in first sample.
 - Second sample, nitrate analysis only
- All results must be loaded to GeoTracker by lab using individual ranch global ID
- All results must also be sent to CCGC
 - Form will be provided for members to give to lab prior to sampling



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

Primary Irrigation Well Monitoring

Tier 2 (high risk crops) and Tier 3

Not required on ranches where CCGC has provided TNA reporting assistance

- Must be indicated on TNA report that CCGC provided assistance
- If using in-house or agronomist's assistance, must state as much and still get same break
- Indicate to CCGC

Tier 1 and Tier 2 (low risk crops)

- Must be sampled twice in 3 years (2017-19)
 - Spring and Fall sample
- Nitrate only if previously sampled by CCGC
- **Or** complete TNA report and get same monitoring break as Tier 2 (high risk crops) and Tier 3



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) reporting Tier 2 and Tier 3 members

- First reports due March 1, 2018
- Discrete number must be used for irrigation supply nitrate-nitrogen concentration reporting on the TNA report (either thru N lab analysis or other approved method)
 - Provide CCGC with Nitrate analysis documentation of results used on TNA report
 - CCGC will submit summary of TNA reports submitted plus lab reports from members
 - CCGC reports will be public information (if PRAR) but not posted on GeoTracker
- Member must indicate on TNA submittal if assistance was provided by CCGC in completing submission
 - In the box titled “Preparer Name”, input “CCGC Assistance Provided”
- Data will be used to track and compare CCGC member TNA accuracy against individual TNA reports



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

TNA Reporting Assistance by CCGC

- **Goals for assistance to members:**
 - **Compliance** of CCGC members with TNA reporting requirement
 - **Accuracy** of information submitted in TNA report
 - Submit laboratory report associated with TNA irrigation well nitrate level
 - “How to” guidance developed by CCGC on record keeping for future reporting



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

Responsibilities of CCGC

Receive domestic well monitoring results from laboratory/consultant contracted by members in a specified format (compatible with GeoTracker).

- Data will also be maintained in CCGCs internal database for assessing exceedances



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

Responsibilities of CCGC

Perform member notification for domestic wells with nitrate exceedances

- CCGC will notify members of an exceedance within 48 hours of verifying results.
- CCGC is responsible for the notification process for their members regardless of who does the sampling.
- Use same forms for user notification and replacement water actions as used 2013-16
- Follow up information due to CCGC 30 days from exceedance notification.

- If domestic wells with nitrate exceedance notification process already completed, then...
 - Member to acknowledge receipt of new exceedance notification and will provide new user notification.
 - Member will provide CCGC with confirmation that current residence has been notified and is aware of existing water quality situation.

- Follow up with members annually to determine if follow up actions are the same and ensure any new users are notified



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

CCGC Reporting to Regional Board

- Member TNA Reporting
 - Semi-annually submit:
 - Spreadsheet containing a list of members assisted by CCGC in TNA reporting. Spreadsheet includes:
 - Operation/ranch staff name who worked with CCGC on TNA reports
 - How and when irrigation nitrate concentration was obtained to complete the TNA form, e.g. lab analysis results.
 - Copy of lab analysis results included as attachment.
 - CCGC must acquire and report this information for all ranches where TNA assistance provided, or, CCGC member will comply with the primary irrigation well test requirement described in MRPs Part 2.



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) Grower “Priority List”

- Regional Water Board to analyze all TNA records, identify ranches with:
 - Highest nitrogen applications
 - Highest estimated loading to groundwater
- CCGC to receive from Regional Water Board TNA PRIORITY LIST of its members then provide Regional Water Board:
 - Brief explanation of what happened;
 - Describe how CCGC assisted in the follow-up actions,
 - Provide feedback CCGC received from grower after follow-up assistance was provided.
 - CCGC to identify members that refused follow-up assistance, e.g. did not communicate after CCGC has contacted them.



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

TNA Support to CCGC Members

- Hold TNA workshops
- Staff a “Help Desk”
- Provide website resources
- Reminders about deadlines



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

- Maintain online resources on CCGC website
 - Calculator to determine amount of usable nitrogen in applied irrigation water.
 - FAQ of common mistakes on completing TNA.
 - List of commercial consultants/entities capable of providing technical agronomic assistance, especially irrigation and nutrient management.
 - Resources identifying nitrogen need by crop, i.e., uptake values (if value published or known).



CCGC Alternative Groundwater Proposal

- If Water Board staff receives CCGC member TNA form with missing or suspect information, Water Board staff may refer the issue to CCGC for resolution; CCGC will work directly with grower to resolve and resubmit TNA, even if that grower did not state that CCGC assisted with TNA report.
- Growers who report “excessive” nitrogen applications (determined by Regional Water Board) will be directed to resources for finding a certified professional who offers nutrient management guidance. CCGC will track and report to Water Board staff assistance offered to members including resources for finding a certified professional.
- CCGC must ensure that the testing of nitrogen in irrigation water is done in a way that is consistent with TNA reporting instructions.
- None of these requirements preclude Water Board staff from also communicating with the CCGC members directly about TNA.



2017 CCGC Membership Structure

CCGC Membership Provides

- Modified domestic/irrigation well monitoring requirements
- Assistance to members in reporting Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA)

Annual Dues Structure

- \$200 per membership
- \$1.50 per acre

Member contracts for own well water sampling

CCGC Membership Requirements

- Well monitoring results provided to CCGC and loaded to GeoTracker by laboratory
- Report to CCGC that TNA report has been submitted to Regional Water Board
- Respond to request for TNA clarification (where needed)



Cost Savings Associated with CCGC Monitoring Plan*

One member, 8 ranches, 131 acres.

eNOI includes:

- 1 Domestic Well
- 7 Primary Irrigation Wells

	Individual Well Monitoring Cost -Ag Suite (\$90)	CCGC Well Monitoring Costs -Nitrate Only (\$25)
Irrigation Well Cost	\$630.00	\$175.00
Domestic Well Cost	\$90.00	\$25.00
GeoTracker (\$20 each)	\$160.00	\$20.00
Acreage Fee (\$1.50)	\$0	\$196.50
CCGC Membership	\$0	\$200.00
Total	\$880	\$616.50
SAVINGS	\$263.50	

*Example using analysis costs from MBAS
Does not factor in labor for collecting the sample; assumed to be equal between individual vs CCGC.

In Summary ...

Membership in the CCGC will reduce your sampling and reporting costs compared to individual enrollment in the Ag Waiver.

CCGC will serve as a liaison between members and the Regional Water Board and RWB staff.

Central Coast agriculture needs to stay unified and have the largest acreage possible enrolled in CCGC so we continue to have “influence and power” when negotiating with the RWB for version 4.0.



Long Term View

We want to be your Water Quality Coalition

- Adapt and Be Responsive
 - Central Coast Water Board learning how to deal with agriculture
 - Central Valley agriculture found that group approach is most cost effective
- BMP Outreach and Education
- One-stop shop for regulatory compliance



Questions?

For additional questions, call 831-240-9533

Email: director@centralcoastgic.org